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5 January 2018

Mrs Jenny Parker  
Executive Headteacher  
Clervaux Nursery School  
Clervaux Terrace  
Jarrow  
Tyne and Wear  
NE32 5UP

Dear Mrs Parker

### **Short inspection of Clervaux Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the nursery was judged to be outstanding in March 2014.

#### **This school continues to be outstanding.**

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are a highly dynamic and effective leader. Since your appointment as executive headteacher of the federation, which came into place in September 2017, you have continued to drive the momentum of change and improvement. Developments since the last inspection have been particularly focused on the environment, such as the outdoor learning and arts studio, and linking these to the deepening of the curriculum. More recent changes have focused on staff development, particularly around curriculum leadership. This has led to staff feeling highly valued and that their skills and attributes are effectively used to support improvement across the whole nursery. The astute appointment of new staff has enabled you to enhance the use of interventions for those children who need more support and for those who are most able, meaning all children are making excellent progress. The establishment of a post to lead pastoral care means that you can support children and their parents even more effectively. You have identified that this new role now needs enhancing and embedding further into the life of the nursery. The nursery's own evaluation and improvement plans together build a clear picture of the nursery due to the wide consultation with the staff you undertook upon appointment.

Teaching is strong. This is because your observations of teaching are astute and accurate. You robustly follow up any points for development at the following observation and have high standards that you expect. Staff talk with children and prompt them to discuss and describe what they are doing. They model language all

of the time, such as describing a pot of yellow paint as 'a ray of sunshine', when developing creative thinking in the outdoor learning. They ask children searching questions to make them think critically or develop their understanding, while still ensuring that learning is fun. During daily reflection, staff were observed skilfully enabling children to think about what they have done during the day and plan what they could do next. This means children engage in their own learning and development. Children are busy learning throughout the day. They are never 'off task'. They behave extremely well, concentrate, listen and are courteous to each other and adults. Children want to come every day, as shown by the good and improving attendance figures.

Your accurate assessments of children's development, and the recently introduced improvements in the quality of observations, tracking and planning, mean that outcomes and progress remain extremely strong. All children make more than expected progress across all areas of the curriculum, with some making better than this. Data analysed by the local authority shows that children who attend this nursery do better than all children nationally by the end of their Reception Year.

You have excellent partnership working with other agencies such as the local children's centre, to the benefit of the children and their families. The local business community also support the nursery through fundraising and extending the curriculum through visits. You recognise that this is an area for further development.

As one parent commented in the online survey: 'Staff have contributed to my child's learning and making them the happy independent child they are today. Clervaux Nursery is a brilliant educational setting who ensure that the children's best interests and needs are fully met and they thoroughly enjoy their first years in education. High five for Clervaux!!!'

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The governing body is not complacent in this or any other area. They ensure that all staff training is up to date. They monitor records and safeguarding policies on a termly basis to make sure they are up to date and fit for purpose. During any visits they constantly review and check arrangements. New members of staff have undertaken safeguarding training as an important part of their induction. They know what to do should they have any concerns. You reacted swiftly to the recent local authority inspection outcomes and commissioned training on identifying the signs of domestic abuse. Staff are now much more confident in identifying any concerns in this area, and you are tenacious in ensuring that once identified, the relevant agencies act swiftly to ensure that children's safety is assured. The paperwork you hold effectively tells the story of any concerns you may have about a child and the effectiveness of any plans or actions that are being taken to support them and their families. Any concerns are logged, and patterns of behaviour are monitored by you. Any issues are responded to swiftly. If a child is unexpectedly absent and the nursery is not aware of this then parents will be contacted on the first morning, and you will make sure they are visited by the end of the second day to ensure that the

child is safe and well.

Staff are always aware of where children are and what they are doing in the nursery. They make sure children are both physically and emotionally secure. Children are taught exceptionally well how to keep themselves safe. In peer massage they are given the autonomy to say 'no' if they do not feel comfortable. In outdoor learning, they are taught how to light fires, use knives or climb trees safely. Parents spoken to during the inspection identified this as a strength of the nursery, and how it had given them more confidence to allow their children to do more adventurous things at home. They also spoke about how well the children had been taught road safety skills, and how they reminded their parents about holding hands when walking along the pavement.

### **Inspection findings**

- Effective challenge by the governing body ensures that the nursery remains focused on the outcomes for the children in its care, and that standards have not slipped, and indeed are showing continuous improvement. By keeping number, shape, space and measure on the school improvement plan, you have ensured that this area has remained a high priority. In observations during the day, I noticed how well-embedded this now is. The middle leader with responsibility for this area has shown an excellent knowledge of how children master these mathematical understandings and skills. Through learning walks alongside you and auditing activities, she is leading staff in this area of work. All staff have embedded mathematical concepts, teaching and learning within all activities. They are regularly using mathematical language in everyday activities, so developing children's understanding. For instance, children were observed exploring the properties of foam, by searching for numerals hidden within it. They then had to identify the numeral having found it.
- The governors, you and subject leaders are well-informed and knowledgeable about the progress of all children. In addition, all staff know each child within the nursery well. This means that, with the improvements to the learning journals, observations and assessments, progress is secured across all areas of learning. Progress meetings swiftly identify those children whose progress has slowed, and effective interventions are quickly put in place. Focused planning for the most-able children means they are continuing to progress even more rapidly. There is little difference between boys and girls in terms of progress and attainment. Those children who are eligible for early years pupil premium make rapid progress from their different starting points.
- A member of the governing body has delegated responsibility for the website and regularly monitors it. The website has been further developed so that parents are able to access information about what each group has been doing during the week, meaning they are well informed. Any small omissions are quickly rectified, such as the publication on the website of the annual accessibility audit.
- Parents have a wealth of ways of being involved in their children's learning and development. Through workshops, stay and play activities working alongside their child, formal parent's evenings and informal information exchanges they are

kept well-informed and develop their understanding of how children learn. The establishment of the pastoral care post means that this relationship is developing further with behaviour management, toileting and 'fussy-eating' being the focus of workshops for parents this term. Your ongoing consultation with parents around their needs means this programme is continuing to expand.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they enhance and embed parental and community engagement in the life of the nursery.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for South Tyneside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Dorrity  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The focus of the inspection was to check whether the outstanding standards identified at the previous inspection had been maintained and to find out how well children were progressing. I held a variety of meetings with you and your staff. I observed adult-supported learning jointly with you in the nursery. I observed a parent activity led by a member of your staff in partnership with the children's centre. I considered a range of evidence including the school improvement plan, leaders' self-evaluation and children's work. I also reviewed minutes from governing body meetings, the nursery website and other documentation.

I met with two members of the governing body and with the school improvement adviser. I considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and spoke with two parents. I also took account of the seven responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.